

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6485

INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA JA

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, JA

SUBJ: MIKI'S SPEECH AND PRESS CONFERENCE

REF: TOKYO 15694

SUMMARY: IN HIS FIRST PUBLIC REMARKS AS LDP PRESIDENT, MIKI SAID HE WOULD TREAT PARTY REFORM AND CONTROL OF INFLATION AS HIS MOST URGENT TASKS. ON HANDLING THE OIL CRISIS, HE SAID HE WOULD AVOID CONFRONTATION WITH THE OIL PRODUCERS. HE SAID A NEW ELECTORAL SYSTEM FOR PARTY PRESIDENT WAS THE KEY TO PARTY REFORM AND ELIMINATION OF FACTIONS, BUT INDICATED HIS RELUCTANCE TO STAND FOR ELECTION IN JULY 1975 AS HE HIMSELF HAD DEMANDED BEFORE HIS NOMINATION. MIKI SAID HE WOULD NOT DISSOLVE THE DIET IN THE NEAR FUTURE AS DEMANDED BY THE OPPOSITION, AND WOULD DEFER APPOINTMENT OF PARTY OFFICERS AND THE CABINET UNTIL SOMETIME AFTER DEC 9. END SUMMARY.

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1. TAKEO MIKI, IMMEDIATELY AFTER HIS ELECTION TO A THREE-

YEAR TERM AS PARTY PRESIDENT AT A CAUCUS OF LDP DIET MEMBERS ON DEC 4, APPEALED FOR PARTY COOPERATION TO OVERCOME "THE GREATEST CRISIS" FACED BY CONSERVATIVES IN POSTWAR JAPAN. HE SAID HE WOULD GIVE URGENT CONSIDERATION TO FIVE ELEMENTS: (1) DRASTIC REFORM OF THE PARTY, PARTICULARLY ON HANDLING OF POLITICAL FUNDS AND ELECTIONS; (2) URGENT BUT TIME-CONSUMING TASK OF CONTROLLING INFLATION; (3) OPEN AND HONEST GOVERNMENT; (4) AVOIDANCE OF CONFRONTATION WITH OIL PRODUCING NATIONS IN SOLVING THE ENERGY CRISIS; AND (5) CLOSE COMMUNICATION WITH THE OPPOSITION PARTIES.

2. LATER DEC 4, MIKI HELD HIS FIRST PRESS CONFERENCE WHICH HE LIMITED BEFOREHAND TO QUESTIONS ON POLITICAL AFFAIRS. HIGHLIGHTS ARE:

A. PARTY REFORM - MIKI CHARACTERIZED REFORM AS THE MOST URGENT TASK OF THE PARTY TODAY. ADMITTING THAT IT HAD TRIED REFORM MANY TIMES BEFORE WITHOUT AVAIL, HE PREDICTED SUCCESS THIS TIME BECAUSE OF THE DEEP SENSE OF CRISIS IN THE PARTY. HE SAID HE CAME TO BE CHOSEN PRESIDENT WITHOUT REGARD TO FACTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE FIRST TIME ONLY BECAUSE OF THIS PREVAILING MOOD. HE SAID HE HOPED TO HAVE HIS REFORM PACKAGE READY IN TIME FOR THE PARTY CONVENTION IN JANUARY 1975.

B. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION - MIKI SAID A NEW SYSTEM FOR ELECTING THE PARTY PRESIDENT WAS THE KEY TO PARTY REFORM. IT WAS ALSO THE MOST EFFECTIVE FIRST STEP TO ELIMINATE THE FACTIONS AND POLITICS ASSOCIATED WITH THEM, HE SAID. WHILE REFUSING TO SPELL OUT THE SPECIFICS OF HIS PLAN, HE SAID HE WOULD SUBMIT HIS IDEAS DEC 9 TO THE REFORM STUDY GROUP HEADED BY LDP VICE PRESIDENT SHIINA. ASKED WHETHER A PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION UNDER A NEW SYSTEM WILL BE HELD IN JULY 1975, AS HE HIMSELF HAD DEMANDED BEFORE HIS NOMINATION FOR PRESIDENT BY SHIINA ON DEC 1, MIKI SAID THE MATTER WOULD HAVE TO BE GIVEN SOME THOUGHT BUT THE PARTY WAS PRESENTLY IN NEED OF PERMANENT, NOT INTERIM, LEADERSHIP.

C. HANDLING OF POLITICAL FUNDS - MIKI AGAIN REFUSED TO BE PINNED DOWN ON SPECIFIC PROPOSALS FOR COLLECTING AND DISPENSING POLITICAL FUNDS. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT THE PARTY'S PROBLEMS STEMMED FROM ITS TIE-UP WITH BIG BUSINESS (I.E. RELIANCE ON CORPORATE CONTRIBUTIONS), AND MEANS UNCLASSIFIED

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SHOULD BE FOUND TO LESSEN THIS RELIANCE AND ULTIMATELY MOVE TOWARD PARTY SUPPORT SOLELY THROUGH INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS. A CEILING SHOULD BE SET FOR ALL CONTRIBUTIONS. WHILE REFUSING COMMENT ON HOW FUNDS CAN BE ALLOTTED WITHIN THE PARTY WITHOUT REGARD TO THE FACTIONS, HE PROMISED TO APPOINT THE KYE FUND HANDLERS -- SECRETARY GENERAL, CHAIRMAN OF THE TREASURY COUNCIL, AND CHIEF OF THE BOARD OF AUDIT -- FROM MEMBERS OUTSIDE THE MIKI FACTION.

D. OTHER FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS -- ASKED WHETHER HE WOULD MAKE PUBLIC HIS FINANCIAL SITUATION IN VIEW OF THE TANAKA DEBACLE, MIKI EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS TO DO SO AFTER DISCUSSING THE MEANS FOR MAKING THE DISCLOSURE WITH HIS PEERS. HE SAID SOME MEANS MUST BE FOUND TO BRING DOWN THE THE ENORMOUS COST OF ELECTIONS SINCE IT POSED A SERIOUS THREAT TO DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT. ASKED TO COMMENT ON REPORTS THAT THE PARTY HAD INCURRED A TEN BILLION YEN (\$33 MILLION) DEFICIT FROM PAST ELECTIONS, MIKI SAID HE DID NOT HAVE THE DETAILS BUT WOULD GIVE THE MATTER URGENT CONSIDERATION.

E. GENERAL ELECTION - MIKI SAID HE HAD NO INTENTION OF DISSOLVING THE DIET IN THE NEAR FUTURE AS DEMANDED BY THE JSP AND THE KOMEITO. ALSO, HE SAID HE WOULD NOT PRESS FOR ADOPTION OF THE SMALL CONSTITUENCY SYSTEM AS PROPOSED BY TANAKA. ANY LDP PROPOSALS ON THAT ISSUE WOULD HAVE TO BE COORDINATED WITH THE OPPOSITION PARTIES, HE SAID. ASKED WHAT HE HAD IN MIND IN PROPOSING CLOSER RELATIONS WITH OPPOSITIN PARTIES, MIKI SIMPLY SAID SUCH RELATIONS ARE IMPERATIVE FOR PROPER FUNCTIONING OF PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY.

F. LDP AND CABINET APPOINTMENTS - MIKI SAID HE WOULD RETAIN SHIINA AS LDP VICE PRESIDENT AND ANNOUNCE HIS CHOICES FOR OTHER LDP OFFICERS AND FOR CABINET POSTS ONLY AFTER CAREFUL DELIBERATION. HE SAID THE ANNOUNCEMENTS WILL BE MADE SOMETIME AFTER DEC 9.

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